

The Lakes Catholic Community

St. Joseph Parish

1305 Okoboji Ave.

Milford, IA 51351

712-338-2274

FAX: 712-338-2191

www.stjosephmilford.org

St. Mary's Parish

1005 Hill Ave.

Spirit Lake, IA

P.O. Box 354

712-336-1742

www.stmarysspiritlake.org



JOY
TO THE
WORLD

Third Sunday of Advent
Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023

News From St. Joseph Parish



WELCOME TO SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

We hope your visit here will be a prayerful time as you enjoy the lakes region. Please consider St. Joseph's as your church away from home. Contact us at the Parish Office if we may serve you in any way.

We are committed to proclaiming the

Good News of Jesus Christ and invite you to join us!

May the Holy Spirit lead us in living as a welcoming Catholic community.

SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

1305 Okoboji Ave.
Milford, IA 51351

OFFICE: 712-338-2274

FAX: 712-338-2191

stjosephmilford.org

PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon.- Thurs.: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fri.: 8 a.m. - 12 noon

RECONCILIATION:

3:15 pm Sat;

8:15 am Sun

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Tuesday 12 noon

MASS SCHEDULE:

Winter

Saturday at 4 p.m.

Sunday at 9 a.m.

Summer

Saturday at 4 p.m.

Sunday at 7, 9 and 11 a.m.

Are you new to the community? Would you like to join St. Joseph Parish? Just fill out the coupon below and return to the office or in the collection basket.

Are you new to the community? Would you like to join St. Joseph Parish? Just fill out the coupon below and return to the office or in the collection basket.

NAME: _____

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Baptism

WELCOME TO St. Joseph and the Catholic Faith to:
Sylvie Joleigh Schild, daughter of Timothy and Maggie (Simonson) Schild, who was baptized Sun., Nov. 5 at St. Joseph.



Special Collections in December

The deadline for donations for the Christmas Flowers collection is Tues., Dec. 19 at 12 noon. Contributions may be placed in the basket on the weekend or dropped off at the office. Donations for the Catholic Charities collection can be placed in the basket at one of the Christmas Masses (December 24 or 25). Please make checks payable to "St. Joseph," and write "Christmas Flowers" or "Catholic Charities" in the memo line.



THANK YOU to all who contributed items for the Mitten Tree. Because of your generosity we are able to assist less fortunate persons with 27 cap and glove sets, 39 caps, 34 pairs of gloves, 4 pairs of socks, 10 scarves and one coat.



MILFORD Community Blood Drive on the Bloodmobile Bus by LifeServe Fri., Dec. 22, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the St. Joseph parking lot. Appointments are encouraged by text LIFESERVE to 999-777, call 1-800-287-4903 or visit lifeservebloodcenter.org.

Together As One

Thank you to those who have already supported diocesan ministries through TAO. As of Nov. 30, we have raised \$19,422 in gifts and pledges toward the goal of \$40,197.00 with gifts from 109 households. Will you help us meet our fundraising goals? Visit www.scdiocese.org/together-as-one.



Ministry Schedule

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 23rd @ 4 p.m.

EMHC: Terri & Tom Reirson, Holly & Paul Skopec

LECTOR: Brad Shell

SERVERS: Asher Knudtson, Brody Titterington

HOSPITALITY: Jim Baumgard, Anne Donovan, Bonnie Duhn, Loretta Halbur, Connie & Dick Mataloni

Sunday, December 24th @ 9 a.m.

EMHC: Dennis Cole, Chris Hinshaw, Cory Knudtson, Bernie Kramer, Becky Wittrock

LECTOR: Joseph Schmidt

SERVERS: Alex Anderson, Will Anderson

HOSPITALITY: Bill & Cheryl Aumer, Dennis Lippon, Marshall Matuska, Arend & Molly Swygman

News From St. Joseph Parish

Religious Education News

By Erin Lorch

Director of Faith Formation

Greetings! Happy Advent! The third candle on the Advent Wreath is lit, and we are called to reflect on JOY.

Happiness is an emotion while joy is a disposition. We, as faithful Catholics, receive JOY as a gift, and yet, we also need to choose joy. When my grandma passed away, I inherited all of her books. I was intrigued by the ones written by Henri Nouwen, a very faithful Catholic priest. They were some of her favorites so I thought I would find a way to be connected to her through the wisdom written in these books. Nouwen is one of those people in my life who has taught me so much about how to live a life filled with joy from reading his books. Something that he wrote that may also stand out to you is the following: "Joy is the experience of knowing that you are unconditionally loved and that nothing—sickness, failure, emotional distress, oppression, war, or even death—can take that love away. . . . Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day" (Nouwen).

When I lost my grandma suddenly, it rattled my family and I greatly. We weren't prepared to lose our family's matriarch. I deeply desired JOY during a time where I felt such deep sadness and confusion. Being the book lover (and religious one) in the family, I inherited my grandma's books. It was through Nouwen's great wisdom on life and God's plan for us that I began to grow in my understanding of joy. Through a very roundabout way, I learned so much more about my Grandma Joy and the joy she had in this life. I am so thankful for the love of my grandma and the legacy of faith that she paved for me.

We had our K-8 Christmas Prayer Service this past Wednesday. Thank you to all of the students, catechists, volunteers, and pizza makers! What a prayerful and joyful night it was!

I hope and pray that all of you experience the joy of Christmas as we continue to prepare this Advent.

December Schedule

December 20-No Class, Catechist Gathering for St. Joseph and St. Mary Catechists at St. Mary's at 6pm.

December 27-No Class

Erin

January Newsletter

- Monday, Dec. 18, 12 noon is the deadline for submitting items to the January newsletter.

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

"BLESS US, LORD,

this Christmas, with quietness of mind; teach us to be patient and always to be kind."

—Helen Steiner Rice

PRAY for these members: Donna Kramer, Pat Graves, Dean Ulrich, Charles Reckard, Vince Bronson, Linda Cunningham, Mark Kollasch, Tutti Willison, Becky Wittrock, Kiana Svoboda, Andrew Gross, Mary Mittag, Mary Langel, Geneva Knudtson, Rick DeMuth, Mary Ann Sigler, Dennis and Alma Klute, Jerry Clark, Robert Rowland, Bill James, Marie Van Hofwegen, Steve Painter, Ginny Yore, Finley Brunsvold, Phyllis Hintz.

PLEASE pray for these special persons: Hudson Grace Koeppen, Kim Higgins, Angel Henkenius, Janet Norgaard, Cozy Nelsen, Ron Heller, Zenrik Young, Elizabeth Olson, Mark McGill, Kevin Tracy, Mary Jones, Pat Reckard, Hope Anderson, Christine Fischer, Tom Kallis, Cheryl Kallis, Duane Doran, Jane Baxter, Wanda Randall, Norine Kennedy, Bruce and Sandy, Kaydan, Adam Hall, Kate Jensen, Cooper Hatfield, Corey Langner, Claire Yaw, Sammy Schumann, Ellie Wiemers, Mary W., Mary Bolan, Charles Graves, Zoe Lorenzen, Heather Hamann, Esther Morris, Wayne Bellinghausen, Maxine Thompson, Lois Doran, Dale Gentry, Mike Cooper, Denny Daberkow, Ray Langel, Tailen Sturtz, Aimee Wallrich, Peggy Price, John Bruening, Ashlyn Clark, Jerry Wolford, Kami Svoboda, Darrel Wedeking, Dan Mulder, Colleen Mulder.



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, Dec. 16

4 p: Deceased Wuebker Family

Sunday, Dec. 17

9 a: For The People

Monday, Dec. 18

No Mass Today

Tuesday, Dec. 19

5:30 p.m.: +Delores Bryant

Wednesday, Dec. 20

No Mass Today

Thursday, Dec. 21

No Mass Today

Friday, Dec. 22

7:30 a: +Al & +Verna Tiefenthaler
+Lyle Feld

Saturday, Dec. 23

4 p: +Betty Newman
+Michael Newman

Sunday, Dec. 24

9 a: For The People

4 p: For The People

6 p: For The People

Monday, Dec. 25

9 a: For The People



Monday, Dec. 18

7:30 p.m.: Al-Anon meets by zoom

8 p.m.: AA meets in Nazareth Hall

Tuesday, Dec. 19

2 p.m.: Eucharistic Adoration.

Mass at 5:30 p.m.

6-7 p.m.: Final Confessions before Christmas following Mass

Wednesday, Dec. 20

No Religious Education

Thursday, Dec. 21

No Mass Today

Friday, Dec. 22

7:30 a.m. Mass

9:30 a to 2 p: LifeServe Blood Drive

Saturday, Dec. 23

4 p.m.: Mass

Sunday, Dec. 24

9 a.m.: Mass

4 p.m.: Mass (Christmas Vigil)

6 p.m.: Mass (Christmas Vigil)

Monday, Dec. 25

9 a.m.: Mass (Christmas Day)

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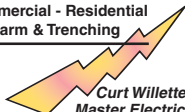
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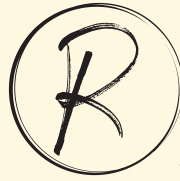
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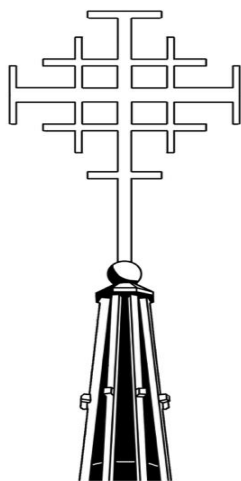
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News From St. Mary's Parish



Help Needed for Decorating Church

We will be decorating the church after the 10:30 a.m. Mass this Sunday, December 17th. We welcome everyone to come help as we prepare for Christmas.

Holiday Parish Office Hours

The St. Mary's parish office will be closed on Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26 for the Christmas holiday. Office hours on December 27 and 28 will be 8 am – Noon. The office will be closed on Friday, December 29 and Monday, January 1 for the New Year's holiday. Thanks in advance for your understanding.

Remembering Loved Ones for Christmas Flower Offering

If you would like to remember your loved ones when submitting your Christmas Flower offering, please include their names on the Christmas Flower Offering envelope that you received in your packet of offertory envelopes this month. If you give online, you can give to the Christmas Flowers fund online but will need to give your list of names to Cynthia in the parish office (smoffice@thelakescatholic.church). To be included in the list of names in the bulletin, we will need your envelope or list of completed names by 8 a.m. on Monday, December 18.

Sauce and Books Ordered at Fr. Sichko Talk

The sauce and books that were available to order at the Fr. Sichko talk have arrived. If you have not picked up your sauce or book yet, please contact Cynthia in the parish office when you are ready to pick up your order.

Young Adult Group

The Young Adult Group (11th and 12th grade Faith Formation for St. Mary's and St. Joseph) targeted the second of the Corporal Works of Mercy - Give Drink to the Thirsty. These students raised \$1,650 to purchase supplies to build 30 CPU (Chlorine Producing Units) for SWIM (Safe Water International Ministries). Each unit will supply clean water for 1000+ people per year. Many units have been in use for 15 years! These units have been distributed to 30+ countries in need of clean water. The students and volunteers did the build at St. Joseph on Wed., Dec. 6, splitting and stripping wires, clamping wire connectors, building titanium electrodes, and soldering! A big thank you to the students for their fundraising and focused building efforts! A big thank you to those who contributed financially, including our Knights of Columbus, our Catholic Daughters, Lake Park Schools penny war, and private donations. They meet Wednesday evenings from 6:45 - 8:00 for Faith Formation alternating the location each month. All 11th and 12th graders are encouraged to join! Contact Jacques Bouli and catechist Sharon Schrunk with any questions.

Christmas Masses

Masses for Christmas Eve will be next Sunday, December 24 at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's and 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. at St. Joseph's. On Christmas Day, Mass will be at 10:30 a.m. at St. Mary's and 9 a.m. at St. Joseph's.

Together As One

Thank you to those who have already supported diocesan ministries through TAO. As of November 14, we have raised \$19,331.00 in gifts and pledges toward the goal of \$30,923.00 with gifts from 72 households. Will you help us meet our fundraising goals? Visit www.scdiocese.org/together-as-one.



WELCOME TO SAINT MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

We hope your visit here will be a prayerful time as you enjoy the lakes region. Please consider St. Mary's as your church away from home. Contact us at the Parish Office if we may serve you in any way.

We are committed to proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ and invite you to join us! May the Holy Spirit lead us in living as a welcoming Catholic community.

SAINT MARY'S
1005 Hill Avenue
P.O. Box 354
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OFFICE: 712-336-1742

stmarysspiritlake.org

Parish Office Hours:

Mon.- Thurs.: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fri.: 8 a.m. - 12 noon

Reconciliation:

4:45 pm Sat;

9:45 am Sun; 11:30 am Wed

Bulletin Deadline

Monday at 8 a.m.

Mass Schedule:

Winter:

Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

If you are a new parishioner at St. Mary's, we welcome you to register with our parish. Simply go to our parish website (stmarysspiritlake.org), and click on "Parish Registration" at the top of the page. Then complete the form, and click "Submit." We look forward to serving you here at St. Mary's!

News From St. Mary's Parish

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, Dec. 18

No Mass Today

Tuesday, Dec. 19

No Mass Today

Wednesday, Dec. 20

12 Noon: +Dolores Mergen

Thursday, Dec. 21

2 p.m.: Adoration

5:30 p.m.: +Mary Lempiainen

Friday, Dec. 22

No Mass Today

Saturday, Dec. 23

5:30 p.m.: +Jeremy Jansen

Sunday, Dec. 24

10:30 a.m.: Liv and Dec of St. Mary's

5:30 p.m.: Liv and Dec of St. Mary's

7:30 p.m.: Liv and Dec of St. Mary's

Sunday, Dec. 24

10:30 a.m.: Liv and Dec of St. Mary's

Monday, Dec. 25

10:30 a.m.: Liv and Dec of St. Mary's



Monday, Dec. 18

No events today

Tuesday, Dec. 19

No events today

Wednesday, Dec. 20

12 p.m.: Mass

Thursday, Dec. 21

2 p.m.: Adoration

5:30 p.m.: Mass

6 p.m.: Adult Choir Rehearsal

6 -7 p.m.: Final Confessions before Christmas

Friday, Dec. 22

No events today

Saturday, Dec. 23

5:30 p.m.: Mass

Sunday, Dec. 24

9 a.m.: Lectio Divina Group, clsm.

10:30 a.m.: Mass

5:30 p.m.: Mass (Christmas Vigil)

7:30 p.m.: Mass (Christmas Vigil)

Monday, Dec. 25

10:30 a.m.: Mass (Christmas Day)

Religious Education News

What a busy but beautiful month! The students all had the opportunity to encounter Jesus in Adoration; many of them for the very first time. They were able to come close to Jesus to renew their faith and love for Jesus hidden in the Blessed Sacrament. I was amazed at their respect and excitement to discover this way to pray. We also had a great time preparing for and performing this year's Nativity Play, "Tell me the Story." Eight of our students were even courageous enough to perform solos and did an outstanding job. All of the students looked so wonderful in their costumes! Thank you to everyone who came out to support them and watch their performance! Lastly, our 7th and 8th Graders were excited to have an end of the year outing to see "The Chosen: Holy Night" on December 13th. We hope to create more opportunities for this age group that falls between the ages of Vacation Bible School and our High School summer events. We are in the process of working on a retreat opportunity this spring for the 7th and 8th Grade students of both parishes, and we hope to focus more on creating a youth group "feel" to their formation in hopes of preparing their hearts for the sacrament of Confirmation, youth group, and leadership opportunities down the road. Lastly, we will have a mid-year catechist gathering on December 20th from 6-8PM at St. Mary's for all of our catechists and assistants. We hope to renew our spirits and share our experiences together so that we can go into 2024 strong!

There will be NO CLASS between December 20th and January 3rd. Have a wonderful Christmas! We will meet again for class on January 10th, and our 2nd Graders will celebrate their First Reconciliation on Saturday, January 13th from 10AM-Noon. Let's keep them in our prayers as they prepare for their First Communion by receiving the mercy of God!

An immense THANK YOU to our meal donors these past few weeks and through December: The Bortschellers, Mike and Heather Kalkhoff, Beverly Sill, Stavers, and Debbie Parks.

Special Collections in December

Donations for the Catholic Charities collection should be placed in the basket at one of the Christmas Masses (December 24 or 25). Please make checks payable to "St. Mary's," and write "Catholic Charities" in the memo line.

Ministry Schedule

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 23rd @ 5:30 p.m.

EMHC: Linda Hansen, Kim Ingwersen, Curt & Sandi Smith

LECTOR: Jean Mohr

SERVERS: Carter Trautman, Kaitlyn Trautman

HOSPITALITY: Jim Bunt, Nancy Carlson, Jim Carney, Mark Ingwersen, Jim Leinbaugh

ONLINE: Dave Hansen

Sunday, December 24th @ 10:30 a.m.

EMHC: Shawna Ditsworth, Michella Koppen, Mindy Leinbaugh, Susan Lynn

LECTOR: Sylvia Jennings

SERVERS: Will Ditsworth

HOSPITALITY: Alan Ditsworth, Brian Koppen, Margie & Tom Lynch, Brian & Kathy Nokleby

Following is general information that may be helpful to you.

✓ **BAPTISMS:** Contact the office to inquire about pre-baptismal class.

✓ **MARRIAGE:** Contact the office at least six months before the date of the wedding.

✓ **CONFESSIONS:** Wednesday at 11:30 a.m., Saturday at 4:45 p.m. and Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

✓ **EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** Thursday from 2 to 5:15 p.m.

Pastor's COLUMN

Confessions for Christmas

We are quickly approaching the great Feast of Christmas. One of the most ancient traditions associated with Christmas is the Sacrament of Confession. Catholics have always gone to Confession in preparation for Christmas. The last opportunity for Confessions before Christmas will be immediately after Mass until 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 19 at St. Joseph and immediately after Mass, until 7 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 21 at St. Mary's.

Office Hours During the Christmas Holiday

The parish offices at both Milford and Spirit Lake will be adjusted during the Christmas Holiday. Our offices will be closed on Monday, Dec. 25 and Tuesday, Dec. 26 so that our staff can celebrate with their families. Both offices will be open Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 27 and 28 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon to accept year end contributions. The offices will be closed on Friday, December 29 and Monday, Jan. 1 for the New Year's holiday. Offices will reopen on Tuesday, Jan. 2 as usual. Thanks in advance for understanding.

Please Note This Change

Contrary to the information included in the Christmas Card, we are making a change in the Mass schedule for New Years. There will be no vigil Mass on Sunday, Dec. 31 at Milford or Spirit Lake. There **will be** a New Year's Day Mass on Monday, Jan. 1, 2024 at 9 a.m. at St. Joseph and 10:30 a.m. at St. Mary's. This day is not a holy day of obligation but we hope you will start the New Year out right by attending Mass.

Financial Books

As always, the financial books for both parishes will close Sun., Dec. 31. Any checks received that weekend must be dated Dec. 31, 2023 to be credited to the 2023 stewardship statement. Statements will be sent to parishioners mid-month in January.



Christmas Eve Masses

Sunday, Dec. 24

4 p.m. and 6 p.m. at St. Joseph; 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's

Christmas Day

Monday, Dec. 25

9 a.m. at St. Joseph; 10:30 at St. Mary's

Stewardship



REPORT

All of the people in today's readings -- the prophet Isaiah, the Virgin Mary, St. Paul, St. John the Baptist -- seemed to understand clearly and rejoice in what God was calling them to be and to do. Do I?

ST. JOSEPH FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP Dec. 9-10, 2023 Att. 458

Adults: \$8,132.50

Loose: \$1,095.00

Online: \$2,015.00

Altar/Rosary: \$30.00

P & J: \$40.00

Food pantry: \$600.00

ST. MARY'S FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP Dec. 9-10, 2023 Att. 511

Adults: \$3,718.00

Online: \$1,312.60

Loose: 1,174.08

Dollar: \$297.00

Votive: \$45.00



Pastor Fr. Brian Hughes

Deacon Darwin Messerly and Deacon Ken Linquist

The St. Mary Staff

Brigitte Bouli.....Dir. K-8 Rel. Education
smdre@thelakescatholic.church

Jacques Bouli.....Director of Youth Ministry
youth@thelakescatholic.church

Cynthia Gniadek.....Office Manager
smoffice@thelakescatholic.church

Ali Oyler.....Director of Music/Technology
liturgy@thelakescatholic.church

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Ali Oyler.....Director of Music/Technology
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Susan Reiser.....Business Manager
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